

WC 05-337

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August 9, 2007

Robert McDowell, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

AUG 16 2007

Re: Commissioner McDowell, represent those Virginians and Americans in need of wireless service

Dear Commissioner Robert McDowell:

The following letter expresses my views so well that I am only adding a personal plea to the beginning. Apart from the fairness issue of rural Americans not having the same access as those who live in areas where it is more profitable to serve, I see this as similar to the rural electrification efforts by Franklin Roosevelt. Someone has to have the fortitude to make important things happen for Americans who need it. Personally, I wanted to move to a more rural area, but settled for another site because it has access to wireless technology. In rural areas, sometimes it is a life and death issue to be able to use wireless, but more generally, it keeps these regions from growing educationally and economically. You are a Virginian, and I believe you realize that this is appalling and detrimental for our wonderful state of Virginia and for our country. My faith in government has been sorely tested in the last few years because of all the things that have happened in the name of my country for which I had no voice. I want to trust that government can work. Please don't merely represent big business because they have your ear. Someone is supposed to be representing us, the citizens of Virginia and the United States.

I understand that the FCC is considering several measures regarding the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am writing to urge you to oppose any proposal that would result in less wireless funding. Ideas like the proposed wireless-only cap are clearly anti-competitive, because they single out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. We should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country—isn't that the purpose of the USF?

The FCC should consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America: wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if USF funding for wireless is reduced, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

Commissioner McDowell, I urge you to vote against any proposal that would result in less funding for wireless service. Rural residents of Virginia and everywhere in America are counting on you to protect our public safety and encourage economic growth by supporting wireless funding from the USF.

Sincerely,



Dianna Richardson
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